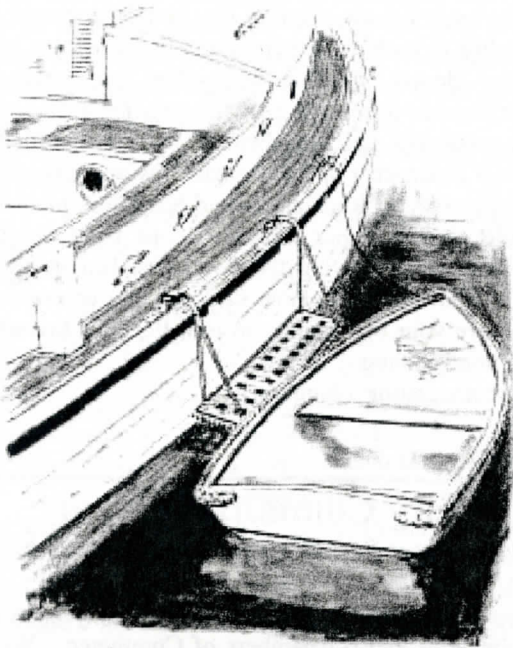


Coming Aboard

By Ted Walsh



Getting aboard our sloop from the tender used to be a challenge. I tried variations on a Jacob's ladder but was unsatisfied with the results. Then, three seasons ago, I made a landing grate. It is a simple project, but it has made a big difference coming aboard.

This is just a narrow grate that hangs about ten inches off the water on the starboard side. Ours is 36" long, 9" deep, and 1 1/2" thick, which makes a big enough step to be stable when coming along side, but is small enough to stow in the starboard cockpit compartment. The outside edge has a shallow gutter going around the perimeter, into which is set a 1" rope fender. It hooks, with bronze hooks, to pad-eyes on the deck, making it easy to set and strike. I used a piece of teak that I had been saving for just such a project, but Douglas fir would work just as well and be less expensive.

We have found that this has not only been a great improvement in getting aboard, but it doubles as a swim platform, and as a fender for the dinghy. Construct the grate with the teeth of the long pieces facing up. The grate should hang about 8" or 10" off the water.

